



SEATTLE SYMPHONY

2009-2010 SEASON

GERARD SCHWARZ, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Thursday, November 19, 2009, at 7:30pm

Friday, November 20, 2009, at 7pm

Saturday, November 21, 2009, at 8pm

Sunday, November 22, 2009, at 2pm

MASTERWORKS SEASON / POPULAR CLASSICS SERIES

TCHAIKOVSKY'S "PATHÉTIQUE" SYMPHONY

Arild Remmereit, conductor

Gabriela Montero, piano

Seattle Symphony

LUDVIG IRGENS-JENSEN

Partita Sinfonica, "The Drover"

Allegro marcato

Lento (Bol's Song)

Allegro

Grave

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Piano Concerto No. 21 in C major, K. 467

Allegro maestoso

Andante

Allegro vivace assai

Gabriela Montero, piano

INTERMISSION

PIOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74, "Pathétique"

Adagio—Allegro non troppo

Allegro con grazia

Allegro molto vivace

Finale: Adagio lamentoso

Gabriela Montero's appearance is sponsored in part by Lenore Hanauer as part of Seattle Symphony's Guest Artists Circle.

Thursday's performance is sponsored by Microsoft.

Talk Music speaker one hour prior to performance.

Title: "The Elvira Madigan Adagio"

Lecturer: George Halverson Fiore, Seattle Symphony Associate Conductor for Choral Activities Emeritus

Ask the Artist featuring Arild Remmereit on Saturday, November 21, following the concert.

Please disconnect all cell phones, signal watches and pagers. Thank you. All programs and artists are subject to change.

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GUEST CONDUCTOR

Arild Remmereit



Critics Say: "The hottest conductor you've never heard of."

(*The New York Times*)

Orchestra

Appearances: With the Atlanta, Baltimore,

Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Milwaukee, New Jersey and Seattle symphonies; Milan's Filarmonica della Scala; the Vienna Symphony, Deutsches Symphonie Orchester Berlin and Munich Philharmonic; the Oslo, Bergen, Royal Stockholm and Copenhagen philharmonics; the NDR Radiophilharmonie in Hanover and the Mozarteum Orchestra Salzburg; and the Rheinland-Pfalz Philharmonic, Bern Symphony and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, among others.

Forté: Remmereit conducted the Residenz Orchestra of Vienna (1989-92) and subsequently served as Artistic Director of the Ukrainian State Opera in Charkow (1992-95). He has also appeared at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen, Norwegian National Opera and Sakai City Opera in Osaka. He made his debut at Milan's Teatro alla Scala conducting Tchaikovsky's *Cherevichki*.

Recordings: With the NDR Radiophilharmonie on the Polygram label, the Oslo Philharmonic for Norwegian Broadcasting and on the Simax label, and the Staatskapelle Dresden for Deutsche Grammophon.

Personal: Born in Norway, Remmereit studied piano, voice and composition at the Norwegian Conservatory of Music in Oslo, graduating in 1986. He attended conducting seminars at the Aspen Music Festival, studied with Jorma Panula in Stockholm and earned a degree from the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Vienna. He has also studied with Leonard Bernstein and appeared as an assistant for Myung-Whun Chung in Oslo and Paris, and for Mariss Jansons in Vienna. He currently makes his home in Vienna.

GUEST ARTIST

Gabriela Montero
Piano



Critics Say:

"Astonishingly brilliant."
(*Chicago Tribune*)

Forte: Montero is particularly noted for her unique improvisations, which have won her

critical acclaim as well as a devoted following around the world.

Guest Appearances: Include performances with the New York Philharmonic under Lorin Maazel, Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl, Philharmonia Orchestra at London's Royal Festival Hall, Rotterdam Philharmonic and UBS Verbier Chamber Orchestra, among many others. Montero was invited to perform alongside Itzhak Perlman, Yo-Yo Ma and Anthony McGill at the Inauguration Ceremony of President Barack Obama.

Upcoming Highlights: Include Montero's debuts with the symphonies of Seattle, Detroit and Cincinnati, as well as the Rotterdam Philharmonic and Kremerata Baltica; recital engagements include appearances at the Perimeter Institute, Van Cliburn Foundation and Cornell University. Festival appearances in Savannah, Verbier and Bergen International Festivals.

Recordings: Include a 2005 album of music by Rachmaninov, Chopin and Liszt; *Bach and Beyond*, a 2006 award-winning album consisting of original improvisations on music by J.S. Bach; and *Baroque*, a follow-up album of improvisations which was released in February 2008 and nominated for a Grammy Award in two categories.

Chamber Music: Montero has a long-established duo partnership with French cellist Gautier Capuçon. In 2009, the pair toured Germany and also appeared at the Salzburg Festival and Paris' Théâtre du Châtelet. They will reunite in 2010 for tours in the U.S. and Europe.

Background: Born in Caracas; studied in the U.S. and later at the Royal Academy of Music in London; won the Bronze Medal at the 13th International Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition.

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On behalf of Microsoft and our employees in the Puget Sound area, we want to thank Seattle Symphony for enriching our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script.

Pamela S. Passman
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PROGRAM NOTES by Paul Schiavo

Notes in Brief

Ludvig Irgens-Jensen was a self-taught composer but a refined and, in his native Norway, a much-admired one. His *Partita Sinfonica* is a suite derived from music written in 1938 for a play set in a rural village. It consequently has a folkloric flavor, especially in the lyrical slow section.

Between 1784 and 1786, **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** enjoyed his greatest professional success. His flourishing reputation rested in no small part on the piano concertos he composed and performed in Vienna during this time. His **Concerto in C major, K. 467**, is one of the finest of those works, with an extroverted opening, a dream-like slow movement, and a brilliant finale.

"I compose," **Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky** once declared, "[so that] through the means of musical language I may pour out my moods and feelings." His final symphony, nicknamed "*Pathétique*," conveys a wide range of "moods and feelings" — passion, elegance, heroism and tragedy.

LUDVIG IRGENS-JENSEN

Partita Sinfonica, "The Drover"

Born: April 13, 1894, in Oslo

Died: April 11, 1969, in Oslo

Work composed: 1939

Little-known outside his native Norway, Ludvig Irgens-Jensen is a cherished composer in his homeland. Irgens-Jensen was essentially self-taught — he studied piano during his youth

but never had a composition teacher — yet developed both a firm grasp of compositional technique. Though he came of age during the period following World War I, when the modernist revolution was reshaping Western music, he largely abstained from the innovative procedures pioneered by Stravinsky, Bartók and other major composers of the day. Instead, he wrote in a conservative manner that combined Romantic harmonies, melodic inflections derived from folk music, and a Neo-classical clarity of form and texture.

In 1938, Irgens-Jensen composed incidental music to accompany a play by the Norwegian writer Hans Kinck called *The Drover*. Not wanting to confine this music to the theater, the composer reworked parts of it into a concert suite the following year. This suite, which Irgens-Jensen titled *Partita Sinfonica*, has four sections, beginning with a prelude that the composer used to establish the rustic atmosphere of the play.

Next comes *Lento (Bol's Song)*, the most famous portion of the composition and sometimes excerpted as a separate orchestral miniature. Jensen wrote this music as a song of unrequited love, and that original incarnation is apparent in the haunting melodic line that sounds against a gentle accompaniment. An energetic fast movement and epilogue round out the suite.

Scored for 2 flutes, the second doubling on piccolo; 2 oboes, the second doubling on English horn; 2 clarinets and 2 bassoons; 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones and tuba; timpani and percussion; harp, celesta, piano and strings.

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Piano Concerto No. 21 in C major, K. 467

Born: January 27, 1756, in Salzburg

Died: December 5, 1791, in Vienna

Work composed: 1785

World premiere: March 9, 1785, in Vienna; Mozart at the keyboard and conducting

Mozart completed his Piano Concerto No. 21 in C major, K. 467, on March 9, 1785. Having taken up residence in Vienna some four years earlier, the composer was now enjoying the period of his greatest success in the Austrian capital. In particular, his "academies," or subscription concerts, had become fashionable events for the city's music-loving aristocracy. Mozart always included at least one piano concerto on these programs, playing the solo part himself. An academy that he gave on March 10, just one day after he completed the C-Major Concerto, prompted the composition of the work we hear now.

In considering this music, however, it is tempting to look beyond such pragmatic concerns as Mozart's need to fill out a concert program, even if this leads us into the difficult area of psychological speculation. Our C-major concerto followed quickly on the heels of the composer's Piano Concerto in D minor, K. 466. The contrast between these two pieces could hardly be more extreme. The stormy D-minor Concerto is one of Mozart's most desperate outbursts, a cry of pathos and struggle, while its successor is relaxed and confident. These concertos thus form a complementary set: one dark and turbulent, the other bright and joyous.

Mozart created several such pairs of emotionally contrasted works; other well-known examples include the great string quintets in C major and G minor, K. 515 and K. 516 respectively, and his last two symphonies, the sternly tragic one in G minor, K. 550, and the "Jupiter," K. 551. More than one commentator has suggested that the composer produced these Janus-headed pairs in order to maintain within himself some sort of spiritual equilibrium. (According to this idea, he would have written the present C-major Piano Concerto to counter the grim drama of the preceding D-minor Concerto.) While no one can prove this hypothesis, we cannot

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but wonder at such vivid expressions of darkness and light coming nearly at once from the same source.

Although not significantly longer than most of Mozart's mature keyboard concertos, K. 467 conveys a sense of grandeur and spacious design — grand and spacious by 18th-century standards, at least. This feeling comes in part from the work's orchestration, since Mozart has added trumpets, flute and timpani to his usual concerto orchestra. But it stems also from the expansive way in which the composer develops the work's themes. We find this especially in the first movement, whose breadth is all the more remarkable for the apparent modesty of its principal melody. As in many of Mozart's concertos, the initial theme is a march, but one more gay than martial in character. Yet this disarmingly simple tune, developed in chains of long, repeating melodic sequences, proves the abundant source for most of the movement.

The ensuing slow movement brings an altogether different mood. As C. M. Girdlestone notes in his classic study *Mozart and his Piano Concertos*, "the world of the Andante is that of the 'dream' andantes, a family which comprises some of Mozart's most beautiful slow movements." This is to say that it is among the most Romantic utterances from of the composer whose music we often regard as the paragon of musical classicism, its gentle keyboard musings over a steady murmur of accompanying triplet figures producing a rhythmic fluidity that foreshadows the style of Chopin.

The finale reveals still another side of Mozart's character, one as different from the earlier movements as each of those was from the other. Here the composer offers a brief movement in rondo form, the playful tone of its recurring principal theme complimented by a spirited display of keyboard virtuosity.

Scored for flute, 2 oboes and 2 bassoons; 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani and strings.

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PIOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74,
"*Pathétique*"

Born: May 7, 1840, in Kamsko-Votkinsk, Russia

Died: November 6, 1893, in St. Petersburg

Work composed: 1893

World premiere: October 28, 1893, in St. Petersburg; Tchaikovsky conducting

The story of Tchaikovsky's final years presents a poignant conjunction of artistic triumph and growing personal anguish. By 1891 the composer had established himself as Russia's foremost musician, having been decorated by the Czar and cheered by audiences throughout his country, Western Europe, and even in America. Yet despite his successes, Tchaikovsky suffered increasingly from fits of anxiety and depression. He complained of real and imagined ailments, was plagued by doubts about his abilities as an artist, and struggled unhappily with his homosexuality.

Tchaikovsky's feelings of pathos often found expression in his music, so it is not surprising that a symphony Tchaikovsky began in the winter of 1891–92 was intended to express a grand program of life, disappointed love and death. The composer soon abandoned this effort, however, declaring it "an empty pattern of sounds without any inspiration." But sometime during the following year, Tchaikovsky found the inspiration he needed. In February 1893 he wrote to his nephew, a favorite correspondent:

"I had an idea for another symphony, one with a program, but a program which shall remain a secret — let them guess away at it ... it is purely subjective. ... There will be much that is novel in the form of this work. For one thing, the final movement will not be a noisy *Allegro* but a broad *Adagio*. You can't imagine what bliss it is to know that my time is not yet over, that I can still do good work."

Composition of the new symphony, Tchaikovsky's sixth work in this genre, progressed quickly, and he directed its first performance on October 28, 1893, in St. Petersburg. The "*Pathétique*" Symphony — its title was suggested by the composer's brother — crowns Tchaikovsky's orchestral music. And despite the enigma of its program, it tells a great deal about his inner life, since passion, elegance, heroism and tragedy all find a place in the work. At the same time, the composition is distinguished by a high level of musical invention and the most successful handling of symphonic form Tchaikovsky ever achieved.

The piece begins with an introductory *Adagio* whose brooding theme is carried over and developed in the succeeding *Allegro*, the main portion of the first movement. There the music is marked by searing harmonies, whirlwind figuration and thunderous outbursts, particularly from the brass. In contrast to the violence of this initial movement, the one that follows suggests an idealized dance. Its waltz-like themes are written in 5/4 meter, and the fact that they flow so smoothly in this asymmetrical pattern testifies to Tchaikovsky's facility as a melodist.

The third movement is as different in character from the second as that one was from the first. It is a triumphal march, and as such has many characteristics of a typical symphonic finale. Between the exuberance of this movement and the elegance of its predecessor, the brooding and violent qualities of the symphony's opening chapter would seem to have been banished. Not so. With the first measures of the ensuing finale, a somber descending scale figure, the music plunges back into the despair intimated by the initial *Adagio*; and the movement that now unfolds, despite its lyrical second theme, proves one of the most sorrowful utterances in the symphonic literature.

Ironically, this dark music filled its creator with joy. Shortly before complet-

ing the symphony, Tchaikovsky wrote: "I swear that I have never felt such satisfaction, such pride, such happiness as I do now in knowing that I am the composer of this beautiful work. ... I love it as I have never loved any of my musical offspring."

And yet, the mournful tone with which the "*Pathétique*" Symphony concludes may have constituted a kind of premonition. Less than two weeks after its premiere, Tchaikovsky was dead. The circumstances of his passing remain uncertain despite many conjectures, which include both suicide and murder. It is, of course, impossible to conclude from this that in writing his final work Tchaikovsky knowingly composed his own requiem. But it is also impossible to refrain from speculating about this, even though such speculation entails notions of Romantic, even supernatural, presentiment.

Scored for 3 flutes, the third doubling on piccolo; 2 oboes; 2 clarinets, the second doubling on bass clarinet; 2 bassoons; 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones and tuba; timpani, percussion and strings.

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